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**FIVE DEFENDANTS INDICTED IN FIVE SEPARATE CASE INVOLVING
COUNTERFEITING OF UNITED STATES CURRENCY**

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott and Resident Agent in Charge Richard A. Sierze of the United States Secret Service announced today that five defendants were indicted Thursday, October 23, 2003, by a federal grand jury in Fresno in five separate cases for offenses involving counterfeit United States currency. Charged were GARTH NOLI CRANE, 41, of Madera, STANLEY JOEY MONTANO, 41, of Visalia, ALLISON BOHANNON, 39, of Bakersfield, DAWN JOANNE DERVISHIAN, 25, and SARKIS A. AVEDIAN, 43, of Fresno.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Stanley A. Boone, who is prosecuting the cases, the defendants were involved in the manufacturing, selling and/or the passing of thousands of dollars of counterfeit United States currency throughout the Central Valley. The Secret Service, along with the extensive work of local law enforcement, investigated these cases and conducted numerous search warrants on residences as well as computers.

The prosecutions are the product of extensive joint investigations conducted by the United States Secret Service, the Bakersfield Police, Fresno Police and Visalia Police Departments and the Madera County Narcotic Enforcement Team (MADNET).

"Combating counterfeit currency is a priority for the United States Secret Service and was the reason the Service was first created in 1865. Fighting counterfeiting safeguards the payment and financial system of the United States. Our tasks cannot be done without the efforts of local law enforcement. It is their work in the initial detection and investigation that leads to a successful investigation of these cases," stated Richard Sierze. "We are committed to working with other law enforcement agencies to vigorously investigate these types of crimes."

On October 9, 2003, the Federal Reserve System issued into circulation a new and redesigned \$20 bill in an effort to combat counterfeiting of United States currency. Those new changes include changes in the color of the bill, including color shifting ink and, for the first time in modern history, background colors other black and green. Additional features include physical changes to the bill itself. New designs for the \$50 and \$100 are scheduled for introduction in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and

unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. If convicted the maximum penalty the defendants face are from 20 to 30 years in prison and/or a \$250,000 fine.

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